

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action, Claims 1-9 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as set forth in the previous Office Action; i.e., as allegedly unpatentable over Linkletter (U.S. Pat. No. 4,087,319) as evidenced by Schmitt et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,036,684), or Kankaanpää et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 4,059,482), or Hill (U.S. Pat. No. 3,855,057), or Cole et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 3,432,936); and Claims 1-3, 9 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as set forth in the previous Office Action; i.e., as allegedly anticipated by or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly obvious over Wedel (U.S. Pat. No. 5,037,509).

As an initial matter, Applicants propose amending the Specification as discussed herein. Applicants respectfully submit that the Specification as amended more particularly describes the claimed inventions without adding new matter and is supported by the originally filed application, including its drawings and claims. See, e.g., Figure 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry and consideration of the amendment to the Specification.

Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-9 and 15 are patentable over Linkletter in combination with Schmitt et al., Kankaanpää et al., Hill or Cole et al. For example, Claim 1 as amended recites a system for transferring a continuously advancing tissue web from a dryer to a reel section comprising: a first fabric defining a first moving conveyor with a bottom surface, the first fabric being positioned downstream from the dryer, the dryer moving at a first speed; a second fabric defining a second moving conveyor with a top surface, the first moving conveyor overlapping the second moving conveyor for a predetermined distance, the first and second moving conveyors being configured to receive a creped tissue web between the conveyors, the tissue web when creped moving at a second speed slower than the first speed of the dryer; and a vacuum device rotatably disposed against the first moving conveyor, the dryer and the vacuum

device disposed relative to each other to form an open draw therebetween, the first and second conveyors moving at a third speed faster than the second speed of the creped web and slower than the first speed of the dryer such that the open draw is negative, the vacuum device configured to produce a suction to pull the creped tissue web to the bottom surface of the first fabric across the open draw for transferring the advancing tissue web into the predetermined distance where the first and second conveyors overlap, the tissue web accelerating to between the second and third speeds when tensioned between the conveyors. Applicants respectfully submit that the cited combination does not disclose each and every element of Claim 1.

The Office Action has conceded that Linkletter is silent with regard to using a vacuum to transfer a sheet to a first fabric. In further contrast to Claim 1, Linkletter is directed to blowing a web W from a Yankee dryer roll 7 to a bottom conveyor belt 14 using an air threading shower. See, e.g., Figure 1 and col. 2, ll. 58-67 of Linkletter. More particularly, the cited reference teaches blowing the web W onto a top surface of the bottom belt 14 with the air threading shower before nipping the web W between a top surface of the bottom belt 14 and a bottom surface of a top belt 38, which is entirely different from Claim 1. One skilled in the art will recognize that blowing the web W onto the top surface of the bottom belt 14 does not generate tension required to prevent formation of wrinkles in the web W.

For at least the reasons discussed in Applicants' previous Request for Reconsideration, Applicants respectfully submit that the secondary references Schmitt et al., Kankaanpää et al., Hill, or Cole et al. fail to remedy the deficiencies of Linkletter. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited references fail to disclose each and every element of Claim 1, alone or in any combination. Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 as amended is patentable over the

cited references and respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn. Applicants further respectfully request allowance of Claim 1 and its dependent Claims 2-9.

Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 15 as amended is patentable over the cited references for at least the reasons discussed above and respectfully request that the rejection to Claim 15 be removed and its allowance indicated.

Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-3, 9 and 15 are not anticipated by and are patentable over Wedel. The cited reference is generally directed to a papermaking apparatus, which uses a granite press roll to press excess water from its paper web before maneuvering a lead-in roll toward the paper web to pick it up and transfer it to a dryer. This is completely different than the tissue system of Claim 1, for example, as recited above.

More particularly, as shown in Figures 1-4 of Wedel, the cited reference discloses a tail transfer apparatus 10 for threading a tail 24 of a paper web W while there is no draw between a press roll 16 and a lead-in roll 26, which are “disposed adjacent” each other. See, e.g., Fig. 1 and col. 7, lines 1-2 of Wedel. The cited reference might subsequently form a draw D but only after the tail 24 is threaded; i.e., once the web W has been transferred past the lead-in roll 26 to a dryer cylinder 52 in order to widen the web W to “full width”. See, e.g., Figs. 4-9. Moreover, the skilled artisan will recognize that the Wedel device is relying on positive draw between its press roll 16 and dryer section 14 to facilitate transfer of the paper web W, which is completely different from Claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Wedel fails to anticipate Claim 1 and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1, its allowance and the allowance of its dependent Claims 2-9.

For essentially the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection to Claim 15 and indicate its allowance.

In view of the foregoing discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-9 and 15 are allowable over the cited references and that the application is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at his convenience should he have any questions regarding this matter, or to resolve any remaining issues.

Please charge any fees required this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,

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